SORROWFUL SAM;

Or, the History of the

TWO BLACKSMITHS.

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SORROWFUL SAM, &c.

MR. Stephens a very worthy gentleman having bought a conſiderable eſtate in Devonſhire, had no ſooner taken poſſeſſion of the manor-houſe, than he began to turn in his mind, how he might prove uſeful to his induſtrious neighbours. He thought the ſureſt means to find out the moſt deſerving, was to obſerve what families were moſt regular at Church on Sundays. The wife and children of one John Parker a blackſmith, drew his notice above all the reſt, he reſolved to go and ſee them, which he did the firſt opportunity; he found Mary Parker in the beſt ſituation in which a good mother can be found; that is to ſay, taking care of her family; an infant lay aſleep acroſs her lap at the ſame time ſhe was putting a patch on her huſband's waiſtcoat, her eldeſt girl was ſpinning the ſecond was learning to knit, a third was getting by heart her ca techiſm, whilſt a fine boy was unbind ing a faggot to heat the oven; a lord' houſe could not be neater, the table were rubbed as bright as a looking-glaſ

and the pewter diſhes on the ſhelf ſhone like ſilver.

Mr. Stephens ſat down and kindly taking the children by the hand, gave each of them a ſhilling, telling them it was a little reward for their good behaviour at church, and he was ſo obliging as to add, he never heard little folks ſay their catechiſm better.

" Bleſſed be God, Sir, ſaid Mary, we have both an excellent Sunday and weekly School in the pariſh, where every poor fam'ly may have their children inſtructed for nothing, would they but be at the trouble to ſend them in a clean, decent manner; yet there is many a mother, I am ſorry to ſay, ſo little thankful for it they won't even be at the pains to do that. A ſmall matter of education, Sir, as I take it, is quite a little portion to a poor child if their parents knew how to value it. My Betſey there can make a ſhirt as well as her miſtreſs, and Sally who is but ſeven years old, has earned enough by ſpinning at odd hours after ſchool to buy her a frock; bringing up children in lazineſs is the root of all

evil; beſides, Sir, continued ſhe, every year there are great rewards given at the ſchool to all children who are regular in their hours and behave well; my girls have an handkerchief or white apron given them, and my boy gets a hat or a pair of ſhoes, beſides Bibles and many other good books proper to be had in all chriſtian families, which they read to me every night, and which are a great comfort to my poor heart, under very trying afflictions."—Mr. Stephens ſaid, he was ſorry to find ſhe was not happy, and aſked her what was the matter?

My lot, Sir replied Mary, is not harder than that of many others, there is an ale-houſe on the common called the Tennis-Court, which cauſes more poverty in the pariſh, than either dearneſs of proviſions or want of labour. But children you may go to play on the green: they were no ſooner gone than ſhe went on, I don't like, Sir, ſaid ſhe, that my innocent babes ſhould ever hear me talk of the vices of their father, as it may harden their little hearts and make them undutiful to him; but as I ſaid before, my lot after all is not harder than that of many of my

neighbours. There is Suſan Waters, the other blackſmith's wife, whoſe huſband is more drunken than mine if poſſible. Sam could earn his too guineas a week as well as my huſband if he would but work, but no ſooner does either of them earn a few ſhillings, than off they are gone tippling, nor do they think of returning to their families, till every farthing is ſpent. As to that, Suſan Waters loves work as little as Sam, ſhe is a lazy, dirty, goſſiping body, and won't even take the trouble to clean and ſend her children to ſchool, only becauſe they were properly corrected for curſing and ſwearing, and for ſeldom getting to ſchool of a morning till other children were going home to dinner, ſo ſhe lets them go ſtrolling like vagabonds all about the pariſh, ſtealing apples, breaking hedges, and committing a multitude of other little treſpaſſes on the neighbours.

I humbly thank God, Sir, no one can ſay my ſcolding temper drives my huſband to the ale-houſe becauſe he can have no peace at home, which I am ſorry to ſay is too often the caſe; a man that works hard all day, Sir, ought to be kind-

ly received by his wife when his labour is done: my John is a very good-natured fellow in the main, and he might have been much worſe than he is, if I had provoked his temper inſtead of trying to mend it by gentle means. I am not without hope he will live to ſee the error of his ways; but all will be right in God's good time who knows what is beſt for us: a life of patient ſuffering I think, Sir, is a daily preparation for death to poor people.—Aye, and for rich people alſo my good woman ſaid Mr. Stephens, or elſe the Almighty ſends his warnings to us in vain; believe me there is no rank of people in life, free from calamity—man is born to ſuffer.——O dear Sir, ſaid Mary, wiping her eyes, why we poor folks never think rich folks can be unhappy. —I can prove to you the contrary, ſaid Mr. Stephens, and I can prove alſo, that he is the happieſt of men, who has the ſtrongeſt faith in God, and the feweſt ſins to repent of, let his condition in life be what it will; yet the beſt people we often ſee are moſt grievouſly afflicted; the Almighty only knows what is beſt for us; beſides Mary, you may be ſure great riches were never intended by Provi-

dence to make men wiſe, or good, or happy that man is always poor, who is always coveting; the only rich man is he who is content with what he hath, for riches ſays the wiſe Solomon, "make to themſelves wings, and fly away," that is to ſay, when they are not applied to the charitable purpoſes for which they were given. Riches indeed may ſupply a man with food, but they cannot give him an appetite to eat it: riches can't heal a broken conſtitution, or quiet the inward gnawings of a guilty conſcience. An abundance of wealth oftener proves a ſnare to a man's ſoul than the means of making him happy; believe me, my good woman, it is not either in the nature of wealth, titles or power to prevent a man from partaking of all the evils of life which the ſins of his nature have brought upon him. I have a very handſome fortune Mary, but I much queſtion if any labouring man in the pariſh would accept it, if he muſt take all my afflictions into the bargain. Why Sir, ſaid Mary, there is not a family in this place that does not envy your good fortune.

I will now ſhew you Mary, whether it has made me a happy man. I will give you a ſhort hiſtory of myſelf, and then leave you to judge what ſhare of happineſs has fallen to my lot. As I have ſaid before, I have a very handſome fortune, I have a fine houſe in London, from which my bad ſpirits oblige me to fly, as my dear wife died ſuddenly in it, my eldeſt ſon is turned out, in ſpite of all my care and pains, one of the moſt profligate young men of his time. I had three fine daughters, who all died in the ſpace of three years; I ſhould have ſunk under this ſevere ſtroke, had not God's goodneſs ſupported me, the ſhock of it deſtroyed my health, though it did not ſhake my belief, that this great affliction was meant in mercy to my ſoul.

I have beds of down, Mary, but my phyſicians order me to lie on a ſtraw mattraſs, and though my bed-chamber is crowded with the moſt coſtly furniture, I ſeldom get two hours ſleep in a night. My table every day is covered with the moſt dainty diſhes, yet I can only eat a turnip, or a potatoe: my cellars are filled with the beſt wines, yet I can drink on-

ly water. I have a coach, a poſt-chaiſe, and a variety of ſaddle-horſes, yet I have an inward complaint, which prevents my making uſe of either, without ſuffering great pain; thus you ſee Mary, how wrong it is to envy people for their great wealth; do you ſhew me a miſerable poor man, and I'll ſhew you ten miſerable rich ones.

What you have been ſaying to me, will do me more good than a ſermon, and I hope it will teach me for the time to come to be quite ſatisfied with any ſtation.

At this moment John Parker came in; you have ſome of the loveliеſt children, John, I ever ſaw in my life, ſaid Mr. Stephens. What a pleaſure it muſt be to you of an evening when your work is done, to ſit here in your great chair, with your little prattlers on your knees, to hear them read their pretty books, and ſay their prayers before they go to-bed. Here John's conſcience flaſhed in his face which became as red as fire ſo ſorely did it ſmite him.

True enough, Sir, however ſtammered he, but I ſuppoſe your worſhip muſt have heard, I am not quite as kind a huſband and father as I ought to be, though I have the beſt wife and children in the world; I know my fault, Sir, and hope in time I ſhall mend it.

I hope you will John, ſaid Mr. Stephens as your own eyes muſt convince you what poverty and diſtreſs a drunken tradeſman brings on his family: that man has a hard heart, John, who lives upon ale, whilſt his poor wife who ſuckles his children, drinks nothing but water; a pint of good beer, John, makes an Engliſhman ſtrong, and hearty, but drunkenneſs makes him both a beggar and a beaſt.—May God's bleſſing for ever attend you Sir, for giving my dear huſband ſuch good advice; I ſhould be the happieſt woman in the world, were he to turn from his preſent evil courſes.

Soon after this Mr. Stephens went away, and on his road home, called on Sam Waters, and though it was the middle of the day, he found him ſtretched at his length and faſt aſleep in his ſhop,

though his yard was full of waggons, ploughs, &c. waiting to be repaired; but not a ſpark of fire was there in the forge, nor a bit of iron to work upon if there had. Several of his children all rags and tatters, lay baſking in the ſun, and kicking up their heels on a bank of cinders. When Mr. Stephens peeped into the houſe, it ſtunk with filth, it ſhocked him to think, how people could conſent to live like pigs, rather than take the ſmalleſt pains to keep themſelves freſh and clean, for though folks may be ever ſo poor, 'tis nothing but their own lazineſs need keep them dirty The furniture of the kitchen he obſerved, had all been very good, but for want of the ſmith's driving an occaſional nail, every thing was gone to rack and ruin; a large oak table was without a flap, the clock had no pendulum; the bellows was without a noſe; the ſkimmer without a handle; the braſs pot without a hanger; the gridiron had hardly any ribs; the frying pan was burnt through; the ſtairs'-door hung without a hinge; the window-bench was full of the parings of potatoes, and on a round table in the middle of the houſe, ſtood a parcel of broken tea-diſhes and

ſaucers, ſome bits of cake lying in the ſlop of a pewter diſh, with the brim melted off.

Mr. Stephens here ſeeing Suſan Waters, who was ſitting over the fire, with her hands idling before her, told her he wiſhed her huſband would call, and look at one of his coach-horſes that was ſick.

Ah Sir, ſaid ſhe, you may as well preach to a man without ears, as talk to our Sam about work, a lazy drunken dog!

Tis a ſad thing to be ſure, ſaid Mr. Stephens, for a poor woman to have a drunken huſband, but that need not hinder you from diſcharging your duties as a wife; what a pity it is you keep your houſe ſo filthy, and your children ſo ragged; clean water coſts nothing, and needles and thread are very cheap; don't you think your children would be much better at ſchool, than beating about the pariſh all day?

My children, Sir, ſaid Suſan, don't love confinement at ſchool, and they

ſhan't go any where to be put upon, nobody ſhall hector over them but myſelf.

Then take my word for it, ſaid Mr. Stephens, you will live to ſee yourſelf the cauſe of their ruin; many a poor fellow, Suſan, has been brought to the gallows by his mother's folly; we are all corrupt by nature, and therefore, if our faults are not corrected in our infancy, how can we expect to obtain favour of the Almighty, when we come to riper years.

O Sir, replied Suſan, with a toſs of her head, 'tis mighty fine talking, you don't know how hard the times are. Yes, ſays Sam Waters, who at that moment came forward ſtaggering, and ſtretching himſelf times, and pleaſe your worſhip, are very hard, taxes are high, and work is ſcarce.

From what I have heard, and from what I ſee Sam, ſaid Mr. Stephens, your idleneſs and your drink are the heavieſt taxes that are laid on your family—you have a deal of work about you, and here I find you faſt aſleep in the middle of the day. Lazy folks Sam, are always com-

plaining of the hardneſs of the times, whilſt induſtrious ones are ſtriving to amend them. As I ſhall now reſide great part of the year at the manor-houſe, I intend to keep a good look out among my tenants, and the poor, that I may have an opportunity to aſſiſt the moſt deſerving, but remember Sam, there is no helping thoſe who won't help themſelves; however as I find you are neither a diſhoneſt, nor an ill-natured fellow, I flatter myſelf you will not be deaf to good advice, and as ſoon as I ſee you prefer your workſhop to the ale-houſe, I will advance a ſum of money that you may lay in a ſtock of goods, and I will cloathe your children if you will inſiſt on your wife's ſending them to ſchool.

Here Sam humbly thanked Mr. Stephens for his promiſed favours, ſaying, he hoped he ſhould live to deſerve them.

I have told his worſhip already, ſaid Suſan, our children don't love ſchool, and they ſhan't go to be put upon, poor things! ſo they ſhan't, they ſhall have their own way, for they are likely to have nothing elſe.

Unhappy miſtaken woman, replied Mr. Stephens, I now ſee that nothing but God's grace can turn the crooked heart to ways of righteouſneſs; don't be ſurpriſed, Suſan, if your own wilful obſtinacy ſhould bring your children to ruin, and you ſhould die of a broken heart in conſequence of your folly.

One ſummer's evening, as Mr. Stephens happened to paſs by the Tenniscourt, he ſaw a number of jolly fellows ſitting under a large tree before the door, ſinging and roaring as if there were neither poverty or ſorrow in the world; among this merry crew he perceived Parker and Waters, the former bluſhed up to the ears on ſeeing Mr. Stephens, for Parker was not at all diſguiſed in liquor, but Waters was too drunk to ſee any thing beyond the quart-pot, which he held to his lips. The moment he had drank it off, he began to roar aloud the old ſong of "let us drink and drive care away," at that inſtant his wife appeared with her rags flying behind her, and her face as black as a chimney-ſweeper, her eyes ſtaring with rage, and her lips white with paſſion, carrying one child under her arm

and leading another by the hand; after having ſet them both on the ground, ſhe flew like a Tyger on her huſband, and ſo belaboured him with her clenched fiſt, that the blood began at length to ſtream from his mouth and noſe, for he was ſo top-heavy, he had not power to defend himſelf; ſhe called him at the ſame time by names too ſhocking to repeat, ſo true it is, that bad words always follow bad actions; at length ſhe twiſted one hand in the hair of his head, ſnatched up her infant with the other, and in this manner ſhe lugged him off in triumph.

The violence of her behaviour ſtruck every one preſent with diſmay, Parker turned as white as a ſheet.—I hope you will not take unkindly the advice of a friend, who has both the power and will to ſerve you.

The men all bowed very civilly, ſaying, they were very much obliged to him, for as he was to get nothing by it they were ſure he would ſay nothing but what was for their good. Mr. Stephens then went on, It is a ſtrange thing my friends, ſaid he, that chriſtian men, who have

ſouls to be ſaved, ſhould call any thing a pleaſure which muſt certainly bring on their ruin. How frequently has it happened that men have died drunk, conſider I beſeech you what an awful thing it is for a being to be launched into eternity in a fit of intoxication, in which the ſoul cannot offer up one prayer for mercy to that great God, before whom it is about to appear.—Let me kindly adviſe you then to think ſeriouſly of what I have been ſaying, live ſoberly if you will live happily, drink leſs abroad at the ale-houſe, that you may eat more with your families at home.

O Sir, cried Parker, looking ghaſtly pale with ſhame, may the bleſſing of heaven forſake me, if ever I am ſeen drunk in this houſe again; my poor dear wife and children how often have I ſtarved your bodies, to pamper my own; merciful Father, forgive the hardneſs of my heart! I have not the excuſe ſome men will make for running to ale-houſes, who have ſcolding, ill-tempered wives at home; my Mary is the beſt tempered, meek creature in the world, and tho' I have drunk gallons of liquor in a week, whilſt ſhe has been lying-in and ſuckling my

children upon a drop of cold water, ſhe never once ſaid, John Parker why do'ſt do o? Nothing but her truſt in God I am certain could make her bear unkindneſs with ſo much patience, O Sir, Sir, I am afraid I am too wicked for heaven's pardon to reach me.

Never deſpair, John, ſaid Mr. Stephens, the only thing we are ſure of, is pardon for ſin, upon our ſincere repentance; practice muſt keep pace with prayer; yet it is only daily prayer that can keep us from the commiſſion of bad actions.

Here the whole company humbly thanked Mr. Stephens, for having condeſcended to talk ſo kindly to them, obſerving at the ſame time, what a fine thing it was for ſo great and wiſe a gentleman to have ſo little pride, it was turning his learning to a fine account, and they all knew he ſaid nothing to them which he did not practiſe himſelf every day. Mr. Stephens now wiſhed them a good night, hoping they would all return home to their families, and then walked away with Parker to his houſe. Parker's conſcience ſorely

ſmote him, when he ſaw his ſupper neatly covered up before the fire, whilſt his children were kneeling round their mother, praying for a bleſſing before they went to bed.—We ſaw no ſuch ſight as this at the Tennis-court, John, ſaid Mr. Stephens.—No, indeed, Sir, ſobbed John, this is a bleſſed ſight, which I am not worthy to behold. Have you not read in the ſacred ſcriptures, John, ſaid Mr. Stephens, that the unbelieving huſband ſhall be ſaved by the believing wife. He then told Mary what had happened, and hoped he had brought her home a penitent huſband.—Merciful God, I thank thee, cried this worthy woman, claſping her hands for all thy many favours towards me and mine: may I hope, that the father of my precious babes has reſolved to leave off his evil courſes, and that with God's aſſiſtance, he will endeavour to lead a ſober religious life, we ſhall then not only abound in the good things of this life, but ſhall have the promiſe alſo of enjoying far better things in the life to come.

Sam Waters for ſome weeks kept clear of temptation, and ſeemed to be going

on tolerably well; he looked very down and ſheepiſh when ever Mr. Stephens called upon him, this gentleman encouraged him and bid him have a good heart, telling him at the ſame time, the ſureſt way to avoid ſhame, was to flee from ſin. —All the fault I aſſure your worſhip, again, and again, cried Sam, is not on my ſide; my wife is of ſuch a terrible temper, that the houſe is often too hot to hold us both. I can ſcarcely ever get to church of a Sunday for want of a clean ſhirt, and my coat and waiſtcoat are gone all to rags for want of a ſtitch in time; whilſt Mary Parker, who is a clean, neat, tidy woman, keeps her huſband as well dreſſed as any farmer in the pariſh; alas! Sir, the cloaths you were ſo kind as to give my children, are all gone to tatters already, and they have never appeared at ſchool ſince the firſt Sunday they put them on, 'tis enough to weary the great folks to ſee what a ſlight many poor folks often put upon their favours, however, Sir, I hope my limbs will periſh on my body if ever I am caught drunk at the Tennis-court again.

Take care of what you ſay, Sam, ſaid Mr. Stephens, you have now called on your Maker to witneſs the oath you have made, and very dreadful to you may be the conſequence ſhould you break it. The ſafeſt way, Sam, for the rich as well as poor, is to keep their accounts with heaven ſhort which ſhould be ſettled daily, as merchants and tradeſmen ſettle their books, as we may have but a ſhort notice to pay off a long reckoning—We can do nothing of ourſelves, Sam, but God's grace accompanying us, we have every thing to hope, it is a tower of ſtrength in the hour of danger.

How long Waters kept his vow unbroken will ſhortly be ſeen; in one of Mr. Stephens's evening rides, juſt below the Tennis-court, he ſpied Sam lying dead drunk acroſs the road, when at the ſame inſtant almoſt a waggon, whoſe horſes had taken fright, ran over him, the waggoner ſtaying behind to drink. By the time Mr. Stephens reached the ſpot where Sam lay, they found Waters was not dead indeed, yet there was little appearance of life in him, the waggon had gone over his two legs. When the waggoner came

to ſee the woeful miſery his neglect had cauſed, he was ready to tear his hair for vexation, for he knew he had broken the laws of God by getting drunk, and the laws of the land for leaving his waggon, and he expected every moment when Mr. Stephens would commit him to jail for his offence.

Mr. Stephens kindly gave up his carriage to carry Waters home, ordering his ſervant at the ſame time to gallop off for a ſurgeon, who, on his arrival, found it neceſſary to take off both Water's legs, one above, the other a little below the knee. During his long illneſs Mr. Stephens ordered every thing to be ſent him, that was neceſſary for a man in his condition: it was obſerved by all about him, that the firſt words Sam uttered on coming to himſelf were, O my good God, my puniſhment is but my juſt reward for my ſin; did I not call on thy holy name, to witneſs I would not get drunk, and make a beaſt of myſelf any more? After ſome time, Sam and his whole family were carried to the poor-houſe; people flocked from all parts to hear him tell, how the ſtrength of his own wicked prayers had

brought down heaven's vengeance upon him.

Mr. Stephens called in upon him one day, juſt as he had been telling ſome of his neighbours the hiſtory of his misfortunes; ah, Sir, cried Sam to Mr. Stephens, Divine vengeance has overtaken me at laſt; had I taken your kind advice, this misfortune would never have befallen me, my own bitter oaths, and curſes have brought on my own deſtruction; what a poor miſerable wretch have they made me. My dear friends, ſaid he to the byſtanders, learn wiſdom from the woeful example of SORROWFUL SAM, and remember the rod of the Almighty is always hanging over your heads, however his tender mercy may withhold his hand from ſtriking, but juſtice often provoked, ſooner or later will overtake us.—O neighbours, neighbours; let me beſeech you not to put off the day of your repentance till you are brought to a ſick bed, keep holy the ſabbath, and never fail of attending to your church, for if you do not hear God's word, how can you keep his commandments; if you really pity my ſufferings take warning by them, to avoid fall-

ing into my crimes, and if you wiſh to live and proſper in the land, O my friends, take warning by SORROWFUL SAM.

The moſt hardened fellow preſent did not fail to ſhed tears at ſuch a moving diſcourſe. Mr. Stephens was alſo much affected, kindly ſhook him by the hand, and ſaid he was delighted to hear him talk ſo like a chriſtian, and hoped if his life were ſpared, he ſhould ſee him live like a chriſtian alſo, ſince that alone could prove the ſincerity of his repentance. He then ſpoke to Suſan Waters, telling her he believed no misfortunes could touch her heart, or keep her from goſſiping, and idling about making her children more wicked by her own example. Now mark the end of this indulgent mother, who lived to experience the miſery her own bad conduct had brought upon her children; before her eldeſt ſon, who was her favorite, was eighteen years of age, he was tranſported to Botany Bay, and the laſt words he ſaid to his mother, when loaded with chains and put on board the ſhip, were, "mother the ſight of you is hateful to my eyes, for had you kept me to my ſchool when I was a child, I ſhould

not have ſpent my days in idleneſs learning all manner of wickedneſs, which has brought me ſo early in life to this miſerable paſs." Though Suſan tore her hair and wrung her hands to loſe her darling ſon, yet no one pitied her; your trouble is of your own ſeeking Suſan, the neighbours would ſay, for as you brew, ſo you muſt bake. The reſt of her children likewiſe turned out very badly.

Poor Sam Waters languiſhed in great pain and miſery about two years, but the patience with which he ſuffered his affliction, proved the beſt teſtimony of his repentance, and made every one kind to him, for a hardened ſinner under affliction is a ſhocking ſight indeed. He ſpent the greater part of the day reading the Bible and other good books, which Mr. Stephens ſent him. Some of the old men and women in the poor houſe, would croud into Sam's room, to hear him read chapters and prayers, for in his youth he had received a pretty education, though in his riper years he had not turned it to account. How thankful I ought to be, Sam would ſay, that heaven in taking away the uſe of my limbs, was graciouſ-

ly pleaſed to open my mind to receive the truth's of the Goſpel, for now truly can I cry out, it is well for me I have been afflicted, and though I cannot run a race, I can ſing a pſalm; and ſince I have left off the wicked cuſtom of drinking and ſwearing, I have taken up a much better one for my ſoul's ſafety, of reading and praying; thus he went on reſigned to his dying hour, and his laſt words were, "O neighbours, neighbours! remember to avoid the fate of SORROWFUL SAM."

It is pleaſant to obſerve, that John Parker after the fray of the Tennis-court, was never ſeen diſguiſed in liquor; and what a ſhining example was his wife to thoſe violent women, whoſe quarrelſome tempers drive their huſbands to public houſes, whereby their families are often brought to poverty and ſhame, whereas the mild manners and patient temper of Mary Parker, cauſed ſuch an entire reformation in her huſband, that in a ſhort time they began to thrive prodigiouſly, buſineſs was more briſk than ever, becauſe it was well followed up. His wife did her part to make the moſt of his earnings, for after all, a man's labours can do but

little, if the kind diligent hand of his wife, does not help him to bear the heat and burden of the day.

Mr. Stephens no ſooner ſaw how diligently Parker applied himſelf to his buſineſs, than he lent him a ſum of money, that he might lay in a ſtock of goods at the beſt hand, which would greatly increaſe the profits of his labour; at length money came in as faſt as he could wiſh, and Mr. Stephens was ſo much pleaſed with his eldeſt boy, who was an honeſt, ſenſible lad, that at his own expence, he put him two years to a creditable boarding ſchool, that he might be well inſtructed in writing and arithmetic, and afterwards had him bound out apprentice to the firſt tanner in the country.

It is here proper to notice a little kindneſs of Parker, as long as Waters lived, he ſent one of his children with a plate of roaſt meat and pudding to him every Sunday, for he would ſay, Sam Waters was the beſt friend he ever had in his life, ſince in the looking-glaſs of Sam's vices, he had been able to ſee the uglineſs of his own.

When the fat landlord of the Tenniscourt died of a dropſy, brought on him by hard drinking, the juſtices would never grant the houſe another licence, as it ſtood in the village far from the road ſide, and could be of no ſervice to travellers. 'Tis ſurpriſing to tell, how much in the courſe of a few years this leſſened the poor rates, there being no temptation at hand, to draw labouring men from their families, inſomuch that by not drinking the earnings of a week in an evening at the public houſe they were ſoon enabled to brew a caſk of good beer at home.

In the courſe of a few years, the whole pariſh had reaſon to bleſs God for ſending ſo good a gentleman as Mr. Stephens amongſt them, whoſe hand and heart was ever open to ſuccour the diſtreſſed, and to help forward the induſtrious; but he would never waſte his ſubſtance to pamper lazineſs, or to ſuccour vice; he looked upon the induſtrious poor as his children and friends, but from the drunkard, the liar, the ſwearer, and the thief, his bounty was withheld. And what

is very extraordinary, there never was a reprobate in the parish, but all the little children would run after him and tell him to take warning by SORROWFUL SAM.

FINIS.

The printers intend publishing one number of these valuable tracts every week, until the whole are completed. There will probably be about 50 numbers and a great variety of subjects.

b. 6.

A TRUE ACCOUNT

OF A

PIOUS NEGRO.

SOME years ago an Engliſh Gentleman, had occaſion to be in North America, where among other adventures the following circumſtance occured to him, which is related in his own words.

" Every day's obſervation convinces me that the children of God, viz. thoſe who believe in him, obey him, and on ſuch terms are accepted by him through Jeſus Chriſt, are made ſo by his own eſpecial grace and power inclining them to what is good, and aſſiſting them when they endeavour to be and to continue ſo.

" In one of my excurſions, while I was in the province of New York, I was walking by myſelf over a conſiderable plantation, amuſed with its huſbandry, and com-

paring it with that of my own country, till I came within a little diſtance of a middle aged negro, who was tilling the ground. I felt a ſtrong inclination to converſe with with him. After aſking him ſome little queſtions about his work, which he anſwered very ſenſibly, I wiſhed him to tell me, whether his ſtate of ſlavery was not diſagreeable to him, and whether he would not gladly exchange it for his liberty?" "Maſſah," ſaid he looking ſeriouſly upon me, "I have wife and children; my maſſah takes care of them, and I have no care to provide any thing; I have a good maſſah, who teach me to read; and I read good book, that makes me happy." "I am glad," replied I, "to hear you ſay ſo; and pray what is the good book you read?" "The Bible, maſſah, God's own good book." "Do you underſtand, friend, as well as read this book? for many can read the words well, who cannot get hold of the true and good ſenſe." "O maſſah," ſays he, "I read the book much before I underſtand; but at laſt I found things in the book which made me very uneaſy." "Aye ſaid I, "and what things were they?" "Why maſſah, I found that I was a ſinner, Maſ-

ſah a very great ſinner, I feared that God would deſtroy me, becauſe I was wicked, and done nothing as I ſhould do. God was holy, and I was very vile and naughty; ſo I could have nothing from him but fire and brimſtone in hell, if I continued in this ſtate." In ſhort, he fully convinced me that he was thoroughly ſenſible of his errors, and he told me what ſcriptures came to his mind, which he had read, that both probed him to the bottom of his ſinful heart, and were made the means of light and comfort to his ſoul. I then inquired of him, what miniſtry or means he made uſe of, and found that his maſter was a plain ſort of man, who had taught his ſlaves to read, and had thus afforded him ſome means of obtaining religious knowledge, though he had not ever converſed with this negro upon the ſtate of his ſoul. I aſked him likewiſe, how he got comfort under all his trials? "O maſſah," ſaid he, "it was God gave me comfort by his word. He bade me come unto him, and he would give me reſt, for I was very weary and heavy laden." And here he went through a line of the moſt ſtriking texts in the bible, ſhewing me, by his artleſs comment up-

on them as he went along, what great things God had done in the courſe of ſome years for his ſoul. Being rather more acquainted with doctrinal truths, and the analogy of the bible, than he had been, or in his ſituation could eaſily be; I had a mind to try how far the inclining grace of God, encouraged by a willing, diligent, and obedient mind, had produced that knowledge neceſſary to ſalvation. I therefore aſked him ſeveral queſtions about his notions of ſin, the nature and power of God's grace, and the inſufficiency of his works *alone*, however neceſſary when *joined with* a reliance on Jeſus Chriſt. His artleſs unaffected language, his mild yet expreſſive diſcourſe, diſcovered a heavenly diſpoſed mind, and perfectly charmed me. On the other hand, my entering into all the ſatisfactions he had deſcribed, together with an account to him, which he had never heard before, that thus and thus God in his mercy dealt with all his children, and had dealt with me, drew ſtreams of joyful tears down his black face, ſo that we looked upon each other, and talked with that glow of chriſtian affection, that made me more than ever believe, what I have often too thoughtleſsly

profeſſed to believe, the communion of ſaints, viz. that ſympathy of heart and ſoul which unites and endears good people to each other. I ſhall never forget how the poor excellent creature ſeemed to hang upon my lips, and to eat my very words, when I enlarged upon the bounty and tender mercy of God, the frequent and delightful ſenſe he gives of his preſence by the refreſhings of a quiet conſcience, and the compoſure of a tranquil mind; the faith he beſtows in his promiſes to thoſe who labour to obtain it, and uſe what means are afforded them for that purpoſe; the victories this faith enables them to get over trials and temptations, the joy and peace in thus believing the hope in life and death, and the glorious expectation of immortality (of being raiſed from the dead, to die no more.) To have taken off his eager, delighted, animated air and manner, would have been a maſter-piece for a painter. He had never heard ſuch diſcourſe, nor found the opportunity of hearing it before. He ſeemed like a man who had been thrown into a new world, and at length had found company. Though my converſation laſted at leaſt two or three hours, I ſcarce

ver enjoyed the happy ſwiftneſs of time
o ſweetly in all my life. We knew not
ow to part. He would accompany me
s far as he might; and I felt, for my part,
uch a delight in the artleſs, ſolid, unaf-
ected, ſenſible talk of this good ſoul, that
could have been glad to ſee him often
hen, or to ſee his like at any time now.
ut my ſituation rendered this impoſſible.
therefore took an affectionate adieu,
ith a kindneſs equal to the moſt anci-
nt friendſhip, telling him that neither
he colour of his body, nor the condition
f his preſent life, could prevent him
rom being my brother in our common
ather; that though we muſt part never
o ſee each other again any more in this
orld, I had no doubt of our having an-
ther joyful meeting in our father's home,
here we ſhould live together, and love
ne another throughout a long and a hap-
y eternity. "Amen, Amen, my dear
naſſah. God bleſs you, and poor me too,
or ever and ever." If I had been an an-
el from heaven, he could not have recei-
ed me with more evident delight than
e did; nor could I have conſidered him
ith more regard, if he had been a long
nown chriſtian of the good old ſort,

grown up into my affections in the courſe of many years."

This ſtory ſhews us that GOD deſpiſes not labourers on account of their poverty, or negroes on account of their colour.

It ſhews us that religion, and that only, will make a man content and comfortable in the loweſt ſituations.

It teſtifies the value of the bible, which appears to have been the means of doing ſo much ſervice to this poor negro, by the grace of God aſſiſting his diligent application to it.

Perhaps it may ſerve to fill us with ſhame when we reflect, that with all our great and ſuperior advantages, our knowledge and obedience are far from being equal to what ſeems to have been the caſe with this poor, but virtuous negro.

F I N I S.

☞Next week will be publiſhed, the Hiſtory of Tom White the Poſtilion.